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Photo Intelligence Memorandum

HANOI TO LAO KAY RAILROAD

GP/I-37
(Project 72.145)

November 1954

Declass Review by NIMA/DOD

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Research and Reports

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This memorandum, with attached sketch, is in answer to a request from ORE/S/CST for information concerning the operational status of the Hanoi to Lao Kay railroad as determined from a study of the latest available aerial photography. The latest photography of the area from Hanoi to Viet Tri

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The above photography shows the rail line to be completely abandoned from Hanoi to Lao Kay. The rail line from Hanoi to Yen Bay is situated on the Red River delta. In a few places the rail bed in this area is utilized for foot and other local traffic, but most of the right-of-way is overgrown with vegetation. A few miles south-east of Vinh-Yen is an area predominately trestle extending for approximately three miles. The trestle was damaged and unserviceable but most of the pilings appeared in place and the trestle probably could be repaired without much difficulty.

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From Yen Bay to Lao Kay the rail bed is used as a dirt road, which is less than ten feet wide, and is eroded in some areas. Road bridges bypass destroyed rail bridges. In this area the rail line leaves the Red River delta and follows the Red River as it winds through rough terrain.

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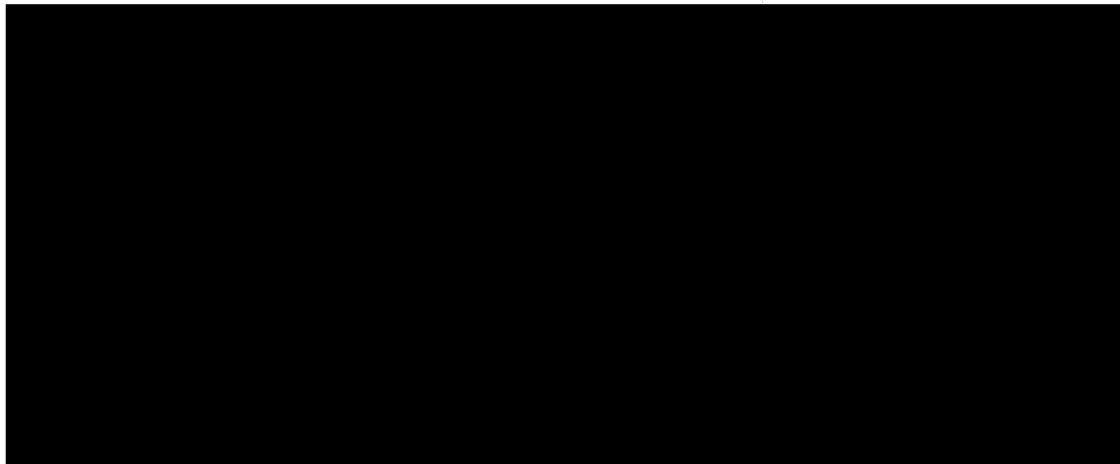
The 120 meter rail bridge at Lao Kay which had been destroyed as of [REDACTED] was rebuilt and is presently used as a road bridge.

The four rail station yards, shown on the included sketch, have been abandoned and are covered with vegetation.

The accompanying sketch indicates the many destroyed bridges along the old rail line.

Except for the destroyed bridges, it would not be difficult to return the rail line to serviceable condition.

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Map References: US Series 1605, Sheet No. 15 (East), 15 (West), 16 (West), 25 (East), 25 (West), 36 (East), 48 (West), 49 (West), Scale 1:100,000.
USAF Pilotage Charts No. 616A, 616B, 616C, Scale 1:500,000.

Additional References:

1. Strategic Engineering Study #78, French Indo-China, Volume II, Railroads, December 1943. (Confidential).

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2. PIC Report No. 103-54, Transportation Study of South Central China and North East Indo China, May 1954. (Secret).
3. The Madrolle Guides - Indo China, 1939. (Unclassified).
4. Special I.D. Report No. 49, Transportation Facilities of Northern French Indo China, November 1944. (Confidential).

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